The IDLER

Public Occurrences, Comment, Excursions & Rational Entertainment

Nr 4 DECEMBER 1964 50c THE COPY

WHICH WAY TO GREAT SOCIETY, MAC?

WHO'S AFRAID OF THE AMA?

AS WELL AS OTHER QUESTIONS, ANSWERS, COMMENTS AND OPINIONS, INCLUDING A REPORT ON THE LATEST DEVELOPMENTS IN SALT-LICKHAM.

Listening to Lyndon Johnson's speeches during the campaign we were reminded of those road signs that proclaim: "Fifteen Miles Straight Ahead to the Giant Snake Farm." As the campaign continued, the signs got bigger and more excited: "Only Four Miles to the Giant Snake Farm! See the Monster Cobras Crush Everything in their Grasp!" And finally: "Turn Left Five Hundred Yards for the Giant Snake Farm! Restaurant — Kiddies Lounge — Liquid Refreshments — Open Year Round!"

Now we've paid our two bucks and we'll be damned if we'll be satisfied by the sight of a couple of lethargic serpents munching on soda crackers.

We want to see a good show. A few amendments, increased appropriations here and there, and new programs so innocuous they hardly raise an eyebrow among the powerful interest groups will not be enough.

One of the first problems the Great Socialites face is the medicare issue. The Johnson Administration has been pushing for a program financed under social security. Motivating the proposal is fear that people won't accept a medicare concept unless it's tied firmly to a system they know and like, such as social security.

Social security *cum* medicare has become part of the liberal creed which shows how timid liberals are getting these days. The AMA has them scared and about all they can scrape up courage to do is to try to sneak medicare in the back door.

The major failing of this approach is not that the goals are unworthy but that they are fastened to a regressive form of taxation and do not adequately provide for the needed expansion of service the future will demand.

Senator Russell Long struck at the heart of the inequity of the proposal when he pointed out that "people could be making $50,000, $100,000 or $200,000 a year and still receive medical assistance provided by the Federal government from a tax on the poor man who has not enough money to put butter on his bread."

Even if the social security system can bear the additional burden assigned to it by the Johnson Administration, it will not be able to meet the increased demands that will inevitably follow. What are we going to do? Raise the social security tax each year?

Social security is a tax on the poor man but medical care for the needy is the responsibility of all.

The social security scheme was pushed after the Kerr-Mills program, which provided federal funds for state health programs, was proved to be inadequate. Only 60% of the states are taking part in the program and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Idler

Published each month in Washington, D. C., for the edification, information, and entertainment of its readers. Fifty Cents the copy. Six Dollars a year (Seven Dollars abroad).

Contents Copyright 1964 by The Idler. Permission is granted to reproduce articles from The Idler, subject to the following conditions:

1. That The Idler will be given proper credit.
2. That a clipping of the reproduced article will be sent The Idler.

Material independently copyrighted, such as articles by Congressional Quarterly, may not be reproduced without the permission of the copyright holder.

Editor: sam smith
The Idler
125 Fifth St. N.E.
Washington 2, D. C.
202-546-9662

Printer: Warren Printing Company
6 State St.
Warren, R. I.
401-245-8888

those that are often fail to do a decent job of it.

The kind of medicare program one supports depends upon one's final goal. If your goal is, as we believe it should be, to have the nation give adequate medical care to those who otherwise could not afford it, then the social security route is not the proper one to take. It proposes to offer an inadequate level of aid indiscriminately to rich and poor alike instead of providing satisfactory assistance to those who really need it.

Kerr-Mills is not the right way, either, because, no matter how attractive it might seem in theory, it has come to be a practical failure.

What to do, then? First, we must cut through the lobbying of the AMA and fear of those who cry "socialism" at every hint of progress. Then we must look at the problem rationally and do something about it.

And the thing to do, in the broadest terms, is simply this: provide necessary medical care to the needy financed from general tax revenues. This is no more socialism or "a giveaway" than providing an education, building highways and dams, or aiding impacted areas is socialism or "a giveaway."

This program should include as many aspects of medical care as the government's financial situation will permit and that means not only hospital expenses, but doctors' fees and nursing home costs as well.

Senator Paul Douglas has called the means test "the most serious defect in Kerr-Mills." Certainly this would also be a problem for a federally administered program. But a means test could be devised by the federal government that would not degrade the recipient of aid and would also be as fair as possible. This would be difficult but not impossible.

The fact that there would have to be an arbitrary cutoff point based on income and other factors is not nearly as disturbing as the fact that the present proposals make no discrimination as to need whatever.

There's a lot of nonsense that's going to have to go by the boards if we are going to face this problem squarely. Talk about "destroying the traditional doctor-patient relationship" is of no help at all and it is disappointing to hear men like Senator Douglas engaging in it. In the case of the medically uncared for we are establishing a relationship that has failed to exist, not destroying one.

If the Johnson Administration continues to cling to the present medicare proposals the Great Society will be off to a shaky start.

This may be no news to our New York readers, but a correspondent sends word from up there that on the 30th floor of least one downtown skyscraper employees divert themselves by betting on the progress of taxicabs on the street below.

They wait until three cabs are lined up side by side at a traffic light, a

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

fairly common occurrence in NYC. First cab across the finish line, six blocks away, wins and so do those who bet upon the successful hack.

We imagine that it's even more exciting than horse racing since there is no end to the variables that can be introduced. Pedestrians, parked cars, intransigent policemen and judicious lane-changing can all effect the movement of the cabs. There is even the possibility that the taxi upon which your hopes are pinned will suddenly forfeit the race and your bet by turning right at 47th St., two blocks before the finish line.

We're not happy about the way things are going down in Mississippi. *Newsweek* has predicted that there will be no arrest or trial in the case of the three civil rights workers murdered last summer because the government can't present a case strong enough to produce conviction. The Justice Department is harrassed by a Federal Judge who threatens to clap a U.S. Attorney in jail. And a group of men convicted of anti-civil rights bombing are given suspended sentences.

Meanwhile, the burnings, bombings and beatings continue.

The law of the land is being mocked in Mississippi. The Federal Bureau of Investigation is running around collecting evidence that won't be used by Federal attorneys fearful of not getting convictions before local juries, while Federal judges drag their feet or are openly hostile to the government.

The Johnson Administration had better start facing up to the fact that it's not providing the protection of law to the people of Mississippi. The bigots and the bombers are contemptuous of Federal power. It's a dangerous situation.

If the government can't prevent the revolting incidents in Mississippi through action in the courts, it should prevent them before they take place.

HE HAS THE POWER

From Title 10 of the U.S. Code:

Sec. 332: Whenever the President considers that unlawful obstruction, combinations or assemblages, or rebellion against the authority of the United States make it impracticable to enforce the laws of the United States in any state or territory by the ordinary course of judicial proceedings, he may call into Federal service such of the militia of any state and use such of the armed forces as he considers necessary to enforce those laws or to suppress the rebellion.

Sec. 333: The President, by using the militia or the armed forces or both or by any other means, shall take such measures as he considers necessary to suppress in a state any insurrection, domestic violence, unlawful combination, or conspiracy if it (1) so hinders the execution of the laws of that state and of the United States within the state that any part or class of its people is deprived of a right, privilege, immunity or protection named in the Constitution and secured by law and the constituted authorities of that state are unable, fail or refuse to protect that right, privilege or immunity or to give that protection or (2) opposes or obstructs the execution of the laws of the United States or impedes the course of justice under those laws . . .

There is little question that the Federal government has the power to provide this protection. Right now the Federal presence in Mississippi is a farce and, because of its ineffectiveness, encouraging the very violence it seeks to end.

The massive investigatory efforts of the FBI have produced little concrete except to convince certain Mississip-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

pians that they — and not the Constitution and the U.S. Code — are the law of the land.

The time has come to act. If it takes FBI men and U. S. Marshals standing guard at every Negro church and meeting place in the state, it is worth it. If it takes government agents (even the Army if necessary) to protect every person in danger of life or property because of his attempt to secure his constitutional rights, it is worth it.

The Federal government has both the power and the obligation to do the job and do it now.

Otherwise, the protection of Federal law and the Constitution will remain a privilege of other people — but not of the Negro in Mississippi.

SALTLICKHAM

Mrs. Frank Whipple drove smash into her husband's greenhouse the afternoon before our first freeze. You never saw so much glass lying around since the time the chandelier fell down at the old Thompson place.

When Mr. Whipple came home from work he weren't too damn pleased with Mrs. Whipple. Not that the car was badly damaged; it was all those exotic plants being out in the cold that got him.

That night it went down to 20° (Fred Piles says his thermometer read 16° at 5:30 a.m. but I've never fully trusted him since he tried to tell me that a beer and a chocolate bar was a good way to cure a bellyache). I went over to Frank's place the next morning to see if I could help him put back the glass and, believe me, I don't think there's anything sadder than a fresh-frozen Venus flytrap all cut up.

Anyway, the point to all this is just to say that it weren't the worst thing that happened to Frank Whipple this year. You see Saltlickham's one of those political weathervane communities the big television networks send people down to find out about. And Frank Whipple is a weather vane's weather vane.

So what does he do this year? He votes for Senator Goldwater.

They say Frank ain't called an election wrong since 1917 when he voted for Tom Whiteburg for county sheriff and nobody told him that Tom had died of pneumonia two days before.

Charlie Thurston (he publishes the *Saltlickham Picayune Item,* a paper so Republican it doesn't come out on Senator Taft's birthday) got Frank into the headlines next day. He says in big black letters:

JOHNSON WINS
WHIPPLE WRONG

Charlie always was good with those headlines. I can remember back when up at Wilson's Corner they used to turn in the same election results each year: 342 for the Republicans and one for the Democrats. Everyone had it pretty well figured out who the Democrat was. By and by he dies. So next election the vote comes back: 341 Republicans and one Democrat. Well, Charlie was up to it, now I tell you. He prints:

WE BURIED WRONG MAN

Charlie thinks Frank went for Goldwater just to be ornery and throw the computors off, but I think it's because he's getting old.

Anyway, one of the men from the network told me when he was down here that he wasn't going to feed Frank's vote into the computor 'cause they didn't have a category for exotic plant growers.

Otherwise, things are cold but quiet here. Margaret Paddleton, Chairman of the Saltlickham Republican Ladies Club, says she's not worried about the war on poverty. "We kicked out General Howe," she told the paper, "and we'll do the same to Sargent Shriver if he tries to march in."

Elizabeth came down with the flu standing out in the weather waiting for Mrs. Johnson's whistlestop train to pull in. Practically had to carry her to the voting booth.

Uncle Abner

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Business Week, according to a letter we received from their Mr. C. M. Schwartz, turned down 12,523 subscriptions last year, resulting in an income loss of $104,011.

Mr. Schwartz says that *Business Week* is exclusively for management men who hold responsible positions in business and industry. "You'd think, wouldn't you," Mr. Schwartz goes on, "that housewives, ferryboat captains, basketball players, barbers and affluent jockeys would understand the publication is not for them. But they keep sending orders anyway. We turn them down as gently as we can. But hell hath no fury like a reader scorned. And our circulation men have the scar tissues to show for it."

We suppose that Mr. Schwartz wants us to feel sorry for him, but, frankly, anybody who deliberately excludes housewives, ferryboat captains, basketball players, barbers and affluent jockies from his company deserves a few scar tissues.

Mr. Schwartz tells us that "naturally we have a very warm place in our hearts for you men of business." Well, as far as we're concerned, you can let that warm spot you've reserved for us cool a bit. We're off to the barber to get a haircut and some stock tips.

In recent months we have heard much from conservatives about the assault on the U. S. Constitution being conducted by leftists under the perfidious leadership of the Supreme Court.

We sympathize with their concern for if there is anything an American conservative should want to conserve it's the Constitution.

But while they traveled through Middlesex, village and farm, warning that the Supreme Court was coming, they were also surprisingly active attempting to amend the very document they consider to be the foundation of our liberties.

During the 88th Congress there were some 300 amendments proposed to the Constitution and almost half were offered by dedicated conservative Senators and Representatives. The conservatives came up with three amendments for every two offered by those liberals who were meant to be so busy undoing the handiwork of our Founding Fathers.

Many of the amendments were virtual duplicates. Some of the conservative proposals were thoughtful. Some, like those concerned with the problem of presidential disability, dealt with obvious deficiencies. Others could be the subject of reasonable debate.

But it was strange to find how often the conservatives wanted to basically alter the structure of the government they were conserving. There were amendments to abolish the income tax, prohibit unbalanced budgets, stop government from competing with private enterprise, permit Congress to override decisions of the Supreme Court, require that the House "advise and consent" in the treaty-making process, expand the powers of the states, and restrict the power of the executive and judicial branches.

Some proposals were trivial such as the amendment related to the method of appointing postmasters. And some left the realm of politics altogether such as amendments that would have the Constitution "recognize the authority of Jesus Christ."

Fortunately, the mass of amendments get lost by the wayside during the legislative year. But in the course of our little inquiry into this matter, it occurred to us that we might, some night, find ourselves in the midst of a dream in which all these amendments are passed and their results realized. Our dream would go something like this:

The Supreme Court would have disappeared, abolished by the Congress under Public Law 180. To be sure, the Supreme Court had ruled PL 180 unconstitutional, but Congress, on the basis of a new constitutional amendment, had overridden that decision by the necessary two-thirds vote.

The Executive Branch, with no means of raising revenues (all forms of taxation had been abolished), could

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

no longer carry out its functions. That really didn't matter much since most of its tasks had been turned over, by constitutional amendment, to the states. Every once in a while it would sign a treaty, which the House would refuse to ratify.

Congress alone remained unamended out of business. The sole survivor of the three former branches of government, Congress would recognize only "the authority of Jesus Christ."

As our dream would end, Christ would be accused of attempting to encroach upon congressional prerogatives and an amendment to take care of that problem would have just been favorably reported out of the House Rules Committee.

At that point, we hope, someone would wake us up and the dream would be over.

This strange paradox of the conservative's compulsion to tinker with the Constitution makes us wonder just who is defending what.

DES MOINES, IOWA

Milton Grady informs us, via his *Gradylogue*, that the little old lady from Dubuque isn't so dumb after all. According to his check of the census, Iowa ranks first in the nation in the percentage of people who can read and write. Grady says only seven out of 1000 Iowans are illiterate. Of course, he hasn't been able to prove conclusively that the little old lady wasn't one of them.

We lost the only election bet we made this year. Early in the campaign we wagered a dinner that Senator Goldwater would promise to go to Viet Nam if elected. The friend with whom we made the bet readily took up the challenge and in retrospect we should have seen that Goldwater would have sent someone else. As one British comedian commented, Goldwater was afraid of traveling too far across the ocean for fear he might fall off the edge.

In accordance with our policy of bringing important news releases to our readers' attention, we hereby announce that Mrs. West is in the Washington area. Mrs. West, according to the broadside we found on our doorstep the other day, "has helped thousands through all walks of life."

The sheet continues:

"You have read about this Gifted Woman in the papers and heard her on the Radio. She is now located in this area for the first time. She has God-Given Power to heal the sick and ailing. She can and will help you as no other can.

"Don't fail to see her. Advice on LOVE, MARRIAGE, BUSINESS, HEALTH, DIVORCES, WILLS, LAWSUITS, LUCK, ALCOHOLICS, SPELLS, EVIL INFLUENCES OF ALL KINDS, HAPPINESS and SUCCESS, who your FRIENDS and ENEMIES are. She will help you as you alone know it—Your PRESENT as it is. She will tell you any change you should or should not make, good or bad. GUARANTEES TO REMOVE ALL EVIL AND BAD LUCK. EVERYBODY WELCOME.

"MRS. WEST IS LOCATED IN HER HOME AT 7813 GEORGIA AVE. N.W. 2nd Floor, WASHINGTON, D.C. DON'T FAIL TO SEE THIS GIFTED AMERICAN READER AND ADVISER. SHE WILL SUCCEED WHERE OTHERS HAVE FAILED."

The Idler makes no claims concerning Mrs. West. We're only telling you that she's here.

From the teen age letter column of the *Washington Evening Star*:

"I like American boys, but I don't want more of their haircuts. The amount of hair cream they use is ridiculous . . . all you good looking American boys, wash your hair and let it look natural. Besides, it would keep the earphones in the language labs much more sanitary."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE IDLER'S JOURNAL

They've got a computor up at the Mayo Clinic that takes a patient's answers to 550 true-false questions and uses the information to indicate whether he should see a psychiatrist.

The machine comes up with diagnoses such as:

"Patient is probably somewhat eccentric, seclusive and withdrawn. Has many internal conflicts. Consider psychiatric evaluation."

And, according to a news report, "it picks out not only the patient in mental trouble but can also print:

" 'Patient quite well organized in thinking. Follows instructions.' "

It is, I suppose, to be expected of a creature of the machine age that it scorn eccentricity, seclusion, withdrawal and internal conflicts in favor of "following instructions." It lives a life without philosophical or moral complexity so it is only natural that it believe we should also.

The computor makes its judgment based on the results of the true-false test, called the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory. Faithfully obeying instructions, the question never arises in its transitorized mind that men who invent tests call the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory may not be the best qualified to judge the thinking processes of others.

The thought never occurs to it that some people prefer the company of interesting eccentrics to that of jargon-ridden psychologists.

I would recommend that the doctors at Mayo not take this machine too seriously. I suspect it of jealousy It couldn't be eccentric if it wanted to. They'd have an IBM repairman down there within minutes and soon it would be happily following instructions again. It knows no internal conflict and thus is totally incapable of speculative thinking and critical examination of itself and the world. It cannot make a Thoreauan withdrawal while doctors are shoving thousands of Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventories through it.

In brief, my diagnosis is this:

This machine suffers from extreme anxiety transferred and rationalized through a subconscious degradation of the human being whom it secretly admires but feels incapable of emulating.

Further, there is reason to believe that the machine has a serious neurosis brought on by its sexual impotence.

Consider psychiatric evaluation.

THE IDLER

We're Ready to Help

Last month, in plenty of time, we told you that THE IDLER would make an excellent Christmas gift. So here it is, with only a few days to go, and you still have a Christmas list longer than the Illinois election ballot.

We invite you to send us that list, along with $6.00 for each person on it, and we'll do everything we can to make sure they know by Christmas Day that they'll be getting a year's subscription to THE IDLER as a gift from you. Please add $1.00 for each overseas subscription.

That may mean sending the word out by air mail, special delivery, or even by telegram. But we're ready to help. We only ask that you help us by letting us know as soon as possible.

And, really now, we can't be responsible for orders received after December 24th.

THE IDLER
125 Fifth St. NE
Washington 2, D. C.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE CASE AGAINST THE MLF

By John Silard

"The Case Against the Multilateral Force," by John Silard is reprinted with permission from the September 1964 issue of the BULLETIN OF THE ATOMIC SCIENTISTS. *Copyright 1964 by the Educational Foundation for Nuclear Science, Inc.*

THE IDLER *thanks the* BULLETIN *and also the Council for a Livable World, for whom the study was originally prepared, for their permission to use excerpts from this article.*

MLF plans are proceeding in the face of distinterest both among our allies and at home, while opponents within our own Government cannot effectively exert their influence as long as our official policy remains wedded to the MLF.

What is the MLF? Essentially, it is a partnership in the operation of a fleet of vessels equipped with strategic nuclear weapons. The Polaris-armed vessels would be manned by mixed forces from various NATO participants, with a veto by any one of the major participating nations on the firing of the weapons. Of course, the veto renders the partnership unequal, since the United States with its nuclear forces in Europe thereby remains the only country which can independently of its allies activate a nuclear exchange. Accordingly, some German advocates of the MLF hope that ultimately the veto will be removed, and Germany will thus obtain its own nuclear force through the MLF. We have encouraged this hope by assurances that MLF is only the beginning of a true European force. Yet such a veto-free MLF would be quite contrary to our present proposals at Geneva for a nuclear freeze and an agreement against further proliferation, with the result that there exists a present inconsistency in our overt representations to the Soviets and our thinly veiled promises to NATO countries.

It is clear that, for the 1960's, MLF proponents vastly overestimate European desire for a larger nuclear role. It is said that without MLF the Germans would soon follow the example of De Gaulle in developing an independent nuclear capacity. But with respect to Germany, not only would an independent nuclear force violate the existing treaties, it would cause a reaction by the Russians, as well as the United States, of a dimension which would give the Germans serious pause before entering on a provocative and expensive nuclear program.

There is, in fact, no evidence that the Germans presently desire a nuclear force of their own. What the Germans do desire in the short run is assurance that the United States is committed to employing its nuclear forces in Europe to forestall any form of aggressive action from the East, and that our weapons are targeted so as to assure that a nuclear exchange would also involve Russian territory, not just German soil. Yet for this modest German concern, the MLF goes too far. Bringing technical personnel from European nations into a second-level role in the targeting and deployment of our existing strategic missiles would go most of the way toward meeting existing German concern about the U.S. nuclear umbrella. The MLF, on the other hand, will create an entirely new nuclear force at sea, which is both expensive and unnecessary in strategic military terms. Moreover, it may kindle rather than quiet nuclear aspirations among our European allies, and thus propel the very sentiment it is claimed the MLF would foreclose — the aspiration for independent nuclear capability. If we espouse the view that our allies' self-respect requires parity of nuclear participation with us, it will not be long

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

before they espouse the same view. By contrast, without our active salesmanship, nuclear arms development may remain unpopular in Germany, England, and other nations.

Come, let us sail together

While the MLF is more than is needed to meet the present concern of our allies, on the other hand, it is inadequate to meet what are likely to be the long-term aspirations of NATO nations. The force of De Gaulle's position for independent nuclear capability is based upon the realization of some fundamental differences of outlook between the United States and European nations. Thus, as much as our nuclear posture in Europe serves to preserve our close relations with allies and to hold the line for our positions vis-a-vis the Soviets, we may yet be increasingly disinclined actually to use these weapons in an exchange which could precipitate an all-out war of annihilation between the United States and the Soviets.

Moreover, the glue in the NATO alliance has been the existence of the common enemy in the East, but a predictable progression of closer relationships with the Soviets, fear of a resurgent Germany, and conflicting economic interests such as those reflected in the split over the Common Market, may radically alter the present community of interest between the United States and some of its NATO allies.

To the extent that anticipations of such changes exist in Europe, there will be growing interest in independent nuclear forces or a European nuclear force not subject to a U.S. veto. In the case of Germany, there will be the added incentive of the role of swing-nation which the pseudopartnership will not satisfy. In sum, as much as the MLF exceeds the presently manifested desire for NATO-nation participation in the nuclear deterrent, it will fall short of the long-term European demand for independent nuclear capability.

It may therefore be anticipated that the strongest pressures will ultimately arise for abandonment of the U.S. veto on the use of the MLF, and that such pressures may in time succeed with the result that the MLF will have paved the way for the very proliferation of nuclear weaponry which it is supposed to forestall. Alternatively, if NATO countries cannot attenuate or force abandonment of the U.S. veto, they may then proceed with the development of their independent nuclear forces, with the added stimulus and know-how which we ourselves have provided through the MLF. It seems, clear, therefore, that the MLF is not a proper answer either to the existing or to the longer range nuclear aspirations of our NATO allies, and will more likely hasten than retard the spread of nuclear weapons in Europe.

Some administration officials who are not advocates of the MLF would nevertheless continue on our present course on the theory that in future bargaining with the Soviets over arms control in Europe, the MLF would provide an additional pawn for trading. Yet as an experienced negotiator knows, one may bargain with assets, but it is difficult to bargain to an advantage with liabilities. If MLF is a free world liability, it cannot become

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a bargaining asset with the Soviets.

Even more importantly, the bargaining pawn argument disregards the fact that if the MLF actually comes into being, it may be impossible to convince our own allies to give it up for an arms control agreement. Once a strategic European force is in existence, our NATO allies may say with some credibility that if it was worth creating for the collective security, it is worth keeping and ought not to be surrendered short of a complete and general disarmament agreement.

Proponents urge that the MLF multiliteral control, with vetoes by major participants, is not materially different from the existing bilateral control over tactical and medium range nuclear weapons in Europe. These proponents argue that with respect to the present nuclear weapons in Europe there is already a system of shared control with the situs nation, and that all the MLF will do is to add more trigger fingers whose concurrence would be necessary for the firing of the weapons.

Apart from some question whether the MLF controls will in fact not give increased leverage to other nations with respect to the use of nuclear weapons, this argument blurs the critical distinction between strategic and tactical weapons. The decision that our NATO allies should share in the deployment and control of tactical weapons located in Europe may have been right or wrong, but it was a radically different decision from that posed by MLF. For a decision to fire the missiles in the MLF would be to launch an attack on the Soviet Union with weapons of medium range so deployed as to be able to reach Soviet targets. In such an event there would ensue a nuclear war in which countless millions of Soviet and American citizens would perish. By contrast, the decision to give our NATO allies bilateral controls over tactical weapons was only a determination that a nuclear exchange initiated within the boundaries of NATO nations properly requires their participation in the decisional process. Accordingly, the MLF cannot be passed off as a mere extension of a bilateral control system to a multilateral control system, for the weapons of strategic war deployed in the MLF have radically different significance for the United States from the nuclear weapons over which we presently share controls with NATO allies.

To a Burned-out Bulb

Little light bulb that burned bright
In the socket of the night;
You created expectation
Of long-term illumination.

I bought you just the other day
In hope that you would light my way
Through all the lengthy months to come,
Unfailing watt and amp and ohm.

But your makers do decree
Fleeting electricity;
The short life-span of your flame
Edison would fill with shame.

Once there were some light bulbs that
One year's darkness would combat,
But how fast your gleam is gone
So that other bulbs may spawn.

How soon your glare-free life's complete,
Created to be obsolete.
Built to last but not too long;
Christened with a funeral song.

Production in this mighty nation
Was aided by your liquidation.
Still as you breathed your final watt,
Did you regret what you were not?

I'm told that it's part of a plan;
Consumption is the end of man.
Though progress praises your brief spark,
I shall curse you in the dark.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A final argument made by some proponents is the converse of the principal non-proliferation rationale for the MLF. Under this argument, it would be desirable to move toward a Western European alliance possessing its own strategic nuclear weapons free of U.S. control and U.S. responsibility. The proponents who welcome such a force urge that the MLF is desirable not because it will end the spreading of nuclear weapons but because it will promote it.

To the extent that this view rests on the desire for a Western European unity it may, for sake of argument, be conceded that such a force would in fact promote some accretion in the unity of the NATO alliance. Yet the chief reason for such unity would be not fear of the Soviets, but fear of the Germans — the anticipation that without participation by other allies, the MLF would be a German-American nuclear alliance. Certainly, this is a fragile base for European unity. Moreover, the price paid in the proliferation of nuclear weapons to more countries and the destabilization of the nuclear balance between the Soviets and the United States by this third force, is a price too high to be paid. In the last analysis, the integrity of the MLF proposal itself becomes subject to question when it is advertised simultaneously as a device which will contain and a device which will promote strategic nuclear weapons in Europe.

There are five major unfavorable aspects to the continuing U.S. insistence upon creation of the MLF:

1. Nuclear freeze and nonproliferation agreements imperiled

President Johnson's proposals at Geneva for nuclear freeze and nonproliferation agreements have been imperiled by our support of the MLF. The Russians quickly seized upon the MLF, pointing out that we could not both stand still and move ahead at the same time, and would have to abandon the MLF if we are serious about the proposed agreements. The Russian claim of inconstancy is somewhat confirmed by William Foster's quoted statement in the *Herald Tribune* of January 24, 1964 that the U.S. freeze proposal would not include the MLF. And as the editorial in the *Washington Post* of February 12, 1964 points out, there is some inconsistency between our offering NATO the MLF as the beginning of a European force and our asserting to the Soviets that it is consistent with a nuclear freeze.

2. Deemphasis of conventional force expansion in Europe

Replacement of nuclear with conventional defensive capability in Europe has been a major policy of the administration. To the extent that the MLF will be costly to our NATO allies and emphasize their continued protection through nuclear response, it militates against the administration's stress on the need for conventional capability among our NATO allies.

3. Production of European rift rather than unity

Our European allies are not requesting the MLF but are having it forced upon them by our insistence. With the exception of some element in Germany, the MLF is not welcome among the other nations, who must join it from fear of German predominance. The MLF is thus a rift-producing issue among our allies. And it is also causing serious internal political friction in NATO countries since it requires them to cast their lot unequivocally either with the United States or De Gaulle. Such a sharp choice situation has unfavorable consequences upon West Germany, and by drawing another divisive line among our allies, disserves the European unity and settlement aspirations entertained by many within our administration. As [Henry A.] Kissinger pointed out:

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"The effort to isolate France by developing in the nuclear field a structure in which West Germany would be the key European member may in fact overstrain the fabric of European cohesion and Atlantic solidarity, and also undermine the domestic stability of West Germany. It is in nobody's interest—least of all West Germany's —to set in motion events that can only end with suspicion and concern in most of the countries of the West about Germany's nuclear role. This is bound to aid the Soviet thrust to divide the West through the fear of Germany. A divided counry, which in the space of 50 years has lost two wars, experienced three revolutions, suffered two periods of extreme inflation and the trauma of the Nazi era, should not, in its own interest, be placed in a position where, in addition to its inevitable exposure to Soviet pressure, it becomes the balance wheel of our Atlantic policy."

4. Political repercussions in the Congress

It also seems clear that the MLF is not presently favored in the Congress, or likely ultimately to win its support. It probably violates or strains the McMahon Act by giving nuclear information to other countries. It gives concern to those who have worried about a remerging Germany as a predominant European power which controls European fortunes. It is not favored by those who value our nuclear monopoly and the direct controls which we have retained upon the strategic weapons of potential annihilation. Meanwhile, the administration has completely bypassed the Congress. The closer we approach activation of MLF, the larger will be the cumulative weight of these congressional concerns.

5. Nuclear race escalation

Following the test ban, there have been widespread hopes that a way would be found to reach a plateau in the nuclear arms race in which there would be a leveling off of nuclear forces within present limits, and no expansion of weaponry to countries which are nuclear free today. Apart from the additional numbers of strategic weapons and nations with such weapon which the MLF would involve, it is today the single proposal for a new advance which stands in the way of a leveling off of the nuclear arms race. This is a serious new ground for a reassessment of the MLF proposal.

Almost all current debates about the MLF are limited to the existing political and military relationship in Europe. All are predicated upon the assumption that there remains a military threat in Europe from the east which requires degrees of nuclear capability in Western Europe. First, however, it must be noted that, except for the special problem of Berlin, conventional forces are demonstrably adequate for the defense of Western Europe against conventional force attack. Moreover, the very hypothesis of an attack upon Western Europe becomes less and less credible as the years pass. Without Soviet participation, such an attack would be meaningless in military terms and therefore unlikely of initiation; with Soviet participation it would unquestionably initiate a world war, which again provides a highest level deterrent. Nor is it clear just what Soviet hope would impel such an attack. Our present military posture in Europe is based on a threat which no one believes.

The fact is that we have continued to give a preemptive position to military policy and nuclear power in Europe in an era when the real problems of Europe are economic and political rather than military. Our continuing diplomacy of weaponry, both against the Soviets and vis-a-vis DeGaulle, stands in the way of the traditional diplomacy, prevents desired economic and cultural exchange, and other normal adjustments between countries as well as the necessary political develop-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ments within them. The MLF perpetuates obsession with military response to rifts with the Soviets and between the Allies, in an era which calls not for an arms polemic but for the progression of relationships between sovereign states.

Those who would promote a detente and ultimately a settlement in Europe, must look beyond such merely military alignments such as the pseudopartnership of the multilateral nuclear force. For the nuclear arms race and the diplomacy of armaments in Europe will not cease as long as the United States itself is the chief promoter of new nuclear weapons systems. On the other hand, a return to the traditional international diplomacy in Europe would foster a climate in which national possession of nuclear arms would appear less vital either for national prestige or national security. As long as the United States remains ready to employ its nuclear strength against a nuclear attack in Europe, there is in fact no security necessity for national nuclear forces. And the demand for nuclear arms in NATO countries attributable to the desire for national prestige and self-esteem reflects a desire which we ourselves are fostering when we proclaim by devices such as the MLF that our NATO allies must have a first-ranking role in the operation of a strategic weapons system. In short, the only way in which our NATO allies can be induced not to strive for a strategic nuclear system of their own is if we ourselves cease our obeisance to nuclear power as the cornerstone of European policy and European defense.

Today we welcome agreements to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons to Latin America and other areas where they are not presently deployed. One may hope that tomorrow we may recognize that in Europe, too, the proper goal is not an accretion in nuclear armaments but the replacement of the nuclear confrontation by political and economic settlements and conventional forces adequate to assure that they are honored. At a time when we should seek to move away from the nuclear arms race, the multilateral force is a move in precisely the wrong direction.

There are essentially three alternatives to the present U.S. position:

1. Abandoning the MLF

While this may constitute long-term wisdom for the United States, it is unlikely that we would renounce the MLF in the near future without at least a serious quid pro quo from the Soviets. It should be noted that if the United States abandons the MLF, it may continue to adhere to its opposition to the independent development of nuclear capability by Germany, and other nations, and we may expect some success in holding our allies to that position at least for the next few years.

2. Initiating a slowdown of MLF activation

This seems the most desirable immediate step, but there is always difficulty in taking the first step away from an established course. Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearings might serve as a temporary brake. A slowdown should pave the way toward ultimate recession by the United States from the MLF proposal.

3. A replacement for MLF

A more modest nuclear partnership might be proposed to meet the present concerns of NATO allies. Second level technical people could be brought into the targeting and planning phases of our existing strategic nuclear force, to give added assurance of our readiness to employ the nuclear umbrella. To the extent that we are, in fact, ready to employ tha umbrella, it seems highly desirable that our allies be assured that this is so. By this means we may satisfy some present concerns among our NATO allies without creating a new strategic striking force in Europe and opening the door to an independent nuclear third force with its troublesome political and military implications.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Dear Uncle Abner:

Do you see any relationship between television and juvenile delinquency?

R.F.T.

Yes, many potential juvenile delinquents are kept out of trouble through employment in the television industry.

Dear Uncle Abner:

My sister and I have been having a heated argument. She says that green is the prettiest color. I say that red is the prettiest color. Which one of us is right?

Mrs. P. H. G.

I'm sorry; your sister is right. Green *is* the prettiest color.

Dear Uncle Abner:

What is the sky?

G. L. R.

The sky is a large blue nylon sheet held up at four corners by means of which we are not yet certain.

At the Boston Lying-In Hospital they have a Director of Patient Maintenance.

MULTITUDES OF LOYTERERS

We tend to consider the problems brought on by automation, such as unemployment and increasing leisure time, as being peculiarly modern in nature. It is interesting to note, therefore, the following passage from Richard Hakluyt's *Discourse Concerning Western Planting*, written in 1584, indicating that the past has offered at least some precedents:

"But wee, for all the statutes that hitherto can be devised, and the sharpe execution of the same in poonishinge idle and laye persons, for wante of sufficient occasion of honest employmente, cannot deliver our commonwealthe from multitudes of loyterers and idle vagabondes. Truthe it is, that throughe our longe peace and seldome sicknes (twoo singular blessinges of Almightie God), wee are growen more populous than ever heretofore; so that nowe there are of every arte and science so many, that they can hardly lyve one by another, nay rather they are readie to eate upp another; yea many thousandes of idle persons are within this realme, which, havinge no way to be sett on worke, be either mutinous and seeke alteration in the state, or at leaste very burdensome to the commonwealthe, and often fall to pilferinge and thevinge and other lewdnes, whereby all the prisons of the lande are daily pestered and stuffed full of them, where either they pitifully pyne awaye, or els at lengthe are miserably hanged."

If you wonder which razor blade to use, we pass along the following information. The Shick Company sponsored full page ads for Dr. Fred Schwartz's Chrisian Anti-Communism Crusade during the recent campaign.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Our Unusual Advertising Policy

Pay Nothing 'Til You Sell!

Try THE IDLER's unusual advertising program. Our advertisers pay nothing until they sell their product. Rate: 10% of selling price if article is under $100, 5% of selling price if between $100 and $1000, and 3% if over $1000. Commission for "For Rent" ads will be based on one month's rent. Anything from birdseed to boats, hockey sticks to houses may be sold through THE IDLER. A line sketch 2" x 2" will help sell your product. THE IDLER reserves the right to determine copy, size of ad, and frequency of publication. Ads will be accepted on a space available basis. THE IDLER assumes no responsibility in transactions.

— —

Advertising Application

I request THE IDLER to run an advertisement concerning the product described below. I agree to pay THE IDLER 10% of the selling price if under $100, 5% if between $100 and $1000, or 3% if over $1000; if my product or article is sold as a result of an inquiry to THE IDLER. I agree to notify THE IDLER promptly of a sale, so that the ad may be withdrawn. I understand THE IDLER will assume no responsibility in transactions. I understand that the ad will be run at the discretion of THE IDLER and that it may be edited to meet space requirements.

Signature .....

Name (print) .....

Address .....

Advertisement Information:

(Give complete and interesting details. Include price.)

THE IDLER
125 Fifth St. N.E.
Washington 2, D. C.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

. . . and for the More Conventional Advertiser

We will be happy to sell you space in the traditional manner, if you prefer. Our rates:

$5 a column inch
$30 a half page
$55 a page

CLASSIFIED RATE: 10c a word

THE IDLER 125 Fifth St. N.E., Washington 2, D. C.

Keep On Reading . . .

BUT COME BACK TO THIS PAGE

This is where we sign up new subscribers. If you would like to receive THE IDLER each month, just fill out the form below and mail it with your check or money order.

Incidentally, THE IDLER, as a service to its subscribers, runs a free classified section. On a space available basis, subscribers may insert a brief ad of any sort other than one selling a product or service. THE IDLER reserves the right to edit all ads. There is no cost for this service. Requests for ads must be submitted each month if they are to be repeated. THE IDLER assumes no responsibility for transactions. Ads must be received by the 1st of the preceding month to be published in the next issue.

To: THE IDLER
125 Fifth St. NE
Washington 2, D.C.

Please enter my subscription to THE IDLER for one year at $6.00 ($7.00 abroad). I enclose check or money order in the proper amount.

Name .....

Address .....

.....

☐ Please insert the enclosed free classified ad in the next issue of THE IDLER (for subscribers only):

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Idler observed planning next issue

BEST WISHES OF THE SEASON

from

The IDLER *Magazine*

TELEVISION

By DICK COMEGYS

To the men who run it, TV is "business;" to the critic, it's "service." And while the terms may not seem irreconcilable, there's a surprising chasm between them.

That there is a genuine chasm is a fact not often appreciated by either side. Both use the same words, but critics and industry spokesmen are by-and-large speaking different languages. Industry statements impress critics as a neat piece of double-think; critics are as incomprehensible to executives as men speaking-in-tongues.

Take words like *quality, value, public-service*. The terms fall easily from the lips of both executive and critic. To the executive, *quality* is the characteristic of a show that makes people tune to it in large numbers. *Value* in a show is the the index of its saleability — generally a large rating and little controversy. *Public-service* lies in the existence of a show at all. That it has been rendered effectively is again indicated by a large rating. This basic service may be enhanced by tips for better living (hopefully commercial), and by plugs for worthy causes, most conveniently scheduled and produced by the Advertising Council. More direct treatment of public affairs tends to be unprofitable and chancy, and is most often broached only in response to pressure or a sense of obligation, most of it focussed through the FCC.

And who's really to say they're wrong? Certainly the business orientation is not at odds with that of radio before it, of motion pictures, the main-stream American theater, or of vaudeville and the tent-shows before that. This is television's heritage. The road is not too obscure from real live Indians to adult-westerns, from snake-oil to shampoo, from bouts on the village green to TV wrestling, from sign-painters to ad agencies, from pitch-men to TV executives. This is reality; this is legitimate enterprise — entertainment-and-selling. There is truthfully nothing to be ashamed of; it fills time and makes life a little more pleasant for a lot of people.

But television, like radio before it, is not only entertainment. The ability to convey information to millions simultan-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

eously has taken it out of the realm of traditional "show-business" and thrust it into the midst of the national community. It was inevitable that broadcasting — with its micro-second ability to relay the sights and sounds of the on-going event, would find itself involved in covering news.

Warren Myers, in Rome, to whom we sent the first issue of THE IDLER via air mail, writes that "for economy's sake I hope that further issues will come by sea mail, being allowed to mellow on the crossing like good madiera in the hold, or Indian Pale Ale on its way to Colonialists in the Punjab." We trust the rest of our foreign subscribers feel the same way, because that's the way they're getting it.

This activity has provided what many of us remember as the outstanding moments of broadcasting: — fire-side chats, the *Hindenburg* disaster, World War II, the United Nations, the Kefauver hearings, Korea, the Army-McCarthy clash, the agonies and triumphs of the space-race, Birmingham, Cuba, Dallas.

Here we're dealing with a dimension beyond entertainment, and yet not totally beyond. For with the great we remember the macabre — the entombment vigils, from Floyd Collins and Kathy Fiscus to the Pennsylvania coal-miners; the endlessly-featured jeer-leading of "mothers" in the New Orleans school-integration battle; the obvious efforts to exploit grief that marks much disaster coverage — a staple especially of local news. There seems a lack of proportion in broadcast news (not alone in the sin), directed toward the entertainment-value of shock and grief. In these circumstances "entertainment" seems somehow inappropriate to the needs of the community.

It's preoccupation with just this, the "needs of the community," that separates the critic most from the executive to whom television is "business." Too often the conflict plays itself out in jockeying for Culture — TV presentation of the classic arts, music, drama. This is futile. The goal is not to get specific programs aired, but to maintain an attitude throughout all programming of treating the audience as people, not numbers. The heart of the critics case is simply that television has a responsibility to open to people the greatest possible perspective on life.

The average broadcaster reacts against this concern with a rather narrowly limited economic view of man — at least so far as broadcasting is concerned with man. But in holding to his restricted view, the broadcaster is avoiding a real can of worms. For should he acknowledge the possibility of developing or modifying national attitudes and opinion through his work, then he must shoulder the responsibility for their twisting-and-turnings. It is easier by far never to acknowledge such a responsibility. The fact is, however, the broadcaster cannot thereby void the power.

The cry of the broadcast-journalist, like that of his brethren in other media, has long been, "I don't *make* the news; I just report it." Yet even the physical scientist no longer discounts the role of the observer in his experiment; and the practice of life tends much more to inject the bystander inescapably into what he claims to be only observing. The presence of a newsman, and much more so of ten or a hundred with tape-recorders and cameras, cannot be discounted in the course of a racial incident, the handling of a disaster, the shape taken b ya neighborhood squabble, the formation of government policy—sometimes for better, sometimes for worse. The very selection of events to be reported is inevitably a judgment of what the viewer shall regard as important; and The journalist does indeed "make" his news.

He need not be ashamed of his role, but he must accept the responsibility that goes with it. What, for instance, is the consequence of the uncritical featuring of a McCarthy, or a Goldwater, or a George Wallace, or a Malcolm X? It doesn't seem to be so obvious to everyone as it is to the journalist that these people are sometimes a little out-of-touch with reality. The journalist has an obligation *to place in perspective* that which he reports.

So also must even the lowliest soap-opera or slapstick comedy be seen as a potential influence. What kind of models are we creating in our heroes and villains? What *is* the effect of a Lawrence Preston, a Lieutenant Rice, a Palladin a Burke, a Neil Brock, a Jack Paar? Truthfuly, I don't know myself. I do know that many pet expressions and character mannerisms of TV's creation have in recent years passed into the American vernacular. And I suspect that a number of program—fostered concepts and attitudes have likewise been transferred into many minds. On a deeper level, I wonder at the impact of the TV rule of "dramatic unity" — the usual pat answer as a substitute for complex reality; at the implications for

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the people of TV's preoccupation with "diversion" in a world rocked by agonizing change.

But most broadcasters still deny the responsibility for thinking out these thoughts. The executives would see themselves not as molders, but as the molded. There persists a romantic belief that it's "the people" who dictate what they want to see; that broadcasters are somehow engaged in a sort of mystic dialogue with their viewers. They imagine a link back from viewer to broadcaster, balancing the obvious impact of broadcast programming on the viewer. Such thoughts are by-and-large ridiculous.

Broadcasting does not have even that sense of dialogue that a performing artist or speaker has with his live audience — the sense of mutual interplay that draws those present into a deeply shared experience. A broadcast program is a shot-in-the-dark. Meters and surveys in no sense complete a dialogue here; a like/dislike choice is usually inferred only from tune-ins o;nly in rare instances is any further nuance of reaction even sought, much less fed back to the performer.

Nowhere, in fact, are broadcasters more neurotic than in attempting to cope with audience efforts to enter into dialogue, whether by letters or calls to stations, or through critical reviews. According to who gets what mail, reaction letters are either swept under the rug, or magnified out of all proportion to their intent. The goal in relation to the audience is not to stimulate and be stimulated, but to keep from rocking the boat; to keep everyone blandly watching.

This is broadcasting's weakness. It does *not* have the feed-back control that executives wishfully think it has. The time is long past when the radio-production *War of the Worlds* could scare the pants off unsuspecting listeners. But today's viewer has no more actual control over what he sees and hears than did the listener then.

Government does intervene to serve as watch-dogs for the "public interest." This outside regulation, however, does not in any case positively shape the growth and effectiveness of the profession. What does give it substance is rather the response of dedicated practitioners to what they see as the needs of persons and the challenges of the frontiers of knowledge — ultimately, man's search for a fuller and more meaningful life for himself and his fellow man.

Television can *never* present pure diversion; it is inescapably bound up with the destiny of the community. What's on the tube cannot help but affect the way viewers approach their lives, individually anl in community. But these viewers have no effective way of influencing — except in the grossest terms of "on/off" — what is presented on that tube. There can be no magic mandate to determine programming emphasis. Even FCC chairmen, and an occasional enlightened NAB president, carry little influence with television's managers. Only the men within the industry, TV's own executives, are in the position to make decisions and act on them for better or worse.

Significant improvement in TV's service to the public will come only with executives who will accept the responsibility for the influence they have in their hands. This means men who will first of all open their eyes to the problems and concerns of community life; who will see an audience as more than a set of numbers. Men who will see that audience as real people, with vital wants and needs beyond a new car and better deodorant soap.

Improvement will come only as men sensitive to the humanity of their viewers first think seriously about what TV can and cannot do; and then have the guts in their program decisions to enter into some of the struggles that people are having with values and goals — with the rocky problems of living together in a more-and-more crowded world.

Improvement will come only as executives and performers see themselves as professionals with a service to offer for living persons; and not as businessmen whose primary concern is the manipulation of people-as-statistics, with the goal an improved profit-and-loss sheet.

TV itself is not a magic answer to the problems of life. It will always be only one voice among many within the community. It may never be able to convey the abstractions of issues as well as print. It will never have the advantage of dialogue that marks personal encounter. But it does have the promise of meaningful stimulus, seen now only in rare flashes. Without a significant change, however, in TV's self-image, from business to profession, it will continue to remain the despair of the thoughtful person.

WANT TO SUBSCRIBE?

TURN TO PAGE 16

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE ABC'S OF MONEY

IN THE FEDERAL RESERVE WE TRUST — TOO MUCH?

by Rep. Wright Patman

"The United States is the only great power in which monetary policy is not subject to the firm control of the incumbent administration."

—The Washington Post

Money is more important than any other part of our economy. If a small group controls the money mart, money is scarce or plentiful, dear or cheap to rent, depending upon this small group's whims, wishes, selfish interests, or public concern. It is this small group that determines whether the people pay high interest rates or low on their farm mortgage, their new automobile, their washing machine, or their split-level. It is the powerful few who have taken authority Congress never intended for them to have who determine whether money is readily available or hard to come by.

In a letter John Adams sent to Thomas Jefferson 2 years before George Washington was sworn in as President, the Massachusetts gentleman wrote:

"All the perplexities, confusions, and distresses in America arise not from defects in their Constitution or Confederation, not from the lack of honor or virtue, so much as from direct ignorance of the nature of coin, credit, and circulation."

Under the Constitution it is the right and duty of the Congress to create money, but when the Congress set up the Federal Reserve System it farmed out its power. A limited authority was transferred to the Fed and the commercial banks.

Today the Fed and the commercial banks possess immense power, since they manufacture money which they lend out or use to purchase securities. This power, if properly used, could work in the public interest. However, the authority has been abused. They charge the public too much money for money they manufacture.

The American people—according to the Department of Commerce—will pay $75 billion in gross interest charges this year. Eleven of the $75 bilion is for annual interest on the national debt. These charges are so high that if the trend continues the day may arrive when it will be true that America cannot afford to spend the money needed for its schools or city and rural area renewal, for mass transit, conservation, recreation or reclamation and for old-age or veterans' compensation or pensions, to name a few. In other words, the more we must pay the moneylenders, the less we have to spend for our national well-being.

The more we are taxed by the moneylenders, the less chance we have to increase our economic growth rate. Unemployment will increase. Business—both manufacturing and retail—is handicapped by high interest charges which they must inevitably pass on to the general public.

Important and powerful bankers are no different from some important and powerful people engaged in manufacturing automobiles, aluminum, steel, or detergents. They want fewer and weaker competitors. They want to lead the pack, dominate their respective markets.

From our earliest history as a nation, a few bankers have had the ambition to gain control over America's monetary policy. There was old Nicholas Biddle, who had his running feud with Andrew Jackson, and fortunately lost. And then there was the House of Morgan, headed by John Pierpont Morgan, who employed the kidglove, gold-cane approach to banking in the early decades of this century. Then Andrew Mellon came along in the twenties. And more recently, there has been the Morgan-Aldrich-Rockefeller banking empire and the giant-sized Giannini Bank of America phenomenon in the West.

Ever since 1913 when the Federal Reserve Act was passed, control of the money mart has become more and more concentrated in fewer and fewer hands. The big bankers did not like the Federal Reserve Act, as enacted, because they were not allowed on the Board to determine the volume of money and interest rates.

The Federal Reserve System was set up because following the panic of 1907 it became clear than an elastic currency and a viable means for transferring reserves among banks was necessary to avert panics and to assure economic stability.

Excerpts of a House speech by Representative Wright Patman of Texas, Chairman of House Committee on Banking and Currency.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

As the then Congressman Alben Barkley stated:

"Against many of their methods (Wall Street) I do complain, and the people of the country have complained, and will continue to complain until the cause for this complaint is removed."

Representative Charles A. Korbly of Indiana, then a Member of the House Banking and Currency Committee, stated in 1913 when the Federal Reserve Act was being considered:

"We have a control by New York banks and New York banking. We propose to break this. We not only propose to break it, but we propose to decentralize it. We propose to scatter it into 12 different sections of the United States. Then it will be a control within a particular section, subject to the power of the Government."

At the beginning the Fed was composed of 12 separate banks, each one an autonomous financial world unto itself. Today, the power of control has gone full circle—back to Wall Street. A half-century of neglect by the Congress—which has not bothered to look at the operations of the Federal Reserve System—has made it a pliable instrument for a comparatively few mighty bankers.

In 1923, the bankers in New York formed a committee of five to issue money and buy bonds on the credit of all 12 Federal Reserve Banks.

The committee got permission from the 12 banks to operate, and this they did until 1933 without sanction of law—merely through a "gentlemen's agreement."

The arrangement was not secure because any of the banks—then autonomous—could have gotten out any time it desired. However, it became profitable for all banks.

This committee of five became the first Open Market Committee, which controlled credit by buying and selling Government securities, employing the sources of all the banks combined. It was called an "Open Market Conference," although in reality it was a "closed" market affair because nobody except the few inner-sanctum members knew what was going on.

In 1927, when the McFadden Act was pending, an amendment was inserted which removed the 20-year limitation on the Federal Reserve System. Thus the Fed, set up for a 20-year trial period, became a permanent American institution.

The new law was passed because the big bankers, through their unofficial Open Market Committee, realized that it would be comparatively simple for them to gain control of the Federal Reserve they had originally opposed.

In 1933, in the depths of the depression, while the Congress was looking the other way, the bankers were writing a law—playing for keeps this time. Under this law an advisory group was set up consisting of a representative from each of the dozen Federal Reserve banks. Each representative would be a banker, and, the Federal Reserve Board, under the law, could not deal in open market transactions without the request of this group of bankers. But the Board was not satisfied with this situation so a change had to take place. Under the Glass-Steagall Act of 1935, the seven members of the Board of Governors and the New York Federal Reserve Bank president—made a permanent member in the early forties—are designated as 8 of the 12 members of the Open Market Committee. Presidents of the other 11 Federal Reserve banks alternate as the other 4 members of the Open Market Committee for short terms.

Fed's Martin

Also under Glass-Steagall of 1935, the 12 members of the Open Market Committee are permitted to wear two hats. They can be bank presidents and members of the Federal Reserve Board 1 day, or they can be Open Market Committee members, buying and selling Government securities, tightening or easing credit, responsible only to themselves and God.

Under the original act of 1913 there were seven members of the Federal Reserve Board, including the Secretary of the Treasury and the Comptroller of the Currency, the latter two ex-officio. The other five members were appointed for 10-year terms, one expiring every 2

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

years. In the 1933 act, the Secretary of the Treasury and the Comptroller were retained, but the other five were appointed on a staggered basis for 12-year terms and finally in the 1935 act, the Secretary and the Comptroller were dropped, and seven members were appointed for 14-year terms, one expiring every 2 years.

There was indeed a method behind these terms of years. The money managers were rigging the tenure so that only one term would expire every 2 years.

Therefore, a President who served two full terms. would only get to appoint two members the first 4 years in office. The third would come the first 2 years of his second term and the fourth the last 2 years of his 8 years as U.S. President.

Moreover our Chief Executive's hands are tied in selecting the Board's Chairman. In the last year of President Kennedy's administration he was allowed to appoint a Chairman of the Federal Reserve Board. Under the Glass-Stegall Act of 1935, he was forced to select the Chairman from one of the seven Board members.

In the 1935 act, the President of the United States could never get control of the monetary policy of the Government he was elected to head. The Fed and the Open Market Committee could veto whatever economic and financial policies Congress and the President desired if the few insiders so wished.

Of the present seven members of the Board the first expiration date is that of Mr. Balderston, whose term expires January 31, 1966. The second is Mr. Shepardson, whose term expires January 31, 1968. Thereafter the expiration dates extend on up through 1978.

In the evolution of the Federal Reserve System, the 11 member banks—aside from the New York bank with its 5,000 employees—have practically gone out of business. Officials and about 15,000 employees of the other 11 Federal Reserve banks are desperate in their efforts to find something to do. At present they are only clearing checks and distributing currency and coin to their member banks. This at a cost of well over $100 million a year to the taxpayers. The fact is the Federal Reserve Bank of New York is the hub of the working mechanism of the Fed. Alfred Hayes president of the New York Federal Reserve Bank, receives a salary of $70,000—fixed by the Federal Reserve —not by Congress—although he is paid by the taxpayers. Only the President of the United States receives a higher salary from the taxpayers.

Chairman Martin, of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, has always insisted that the open market operations are conducted in the New York Federal Reserve Bank but under the direction of the Open Market Committee.

The fact is the New York Federal Reserve Bank has been acting independently—sort of as a "wild card" roving end of the Federal Reserve System. What Coach Martin wants sometimes he fails to get because "wild card" end Hayes decides he wants to do something else and runs with the ball another way.

Under the law everything that is done in the New York Federal Reserve Bank is under the direction of President Hayes. Section 4 of the Fed Act provides that the President "shall be the chief executive officer of the bank and all employees—shall be directly responsible to him." They are. He is responsible to a Board of Directors who selected him as President, composed of nine members, six of whom were selected by the private commercial banks.

I have previously mentioned the Open Market Committee — which has been called "the fourth branch of the Government." It meets secretly every 3 weeks—and in these meetings the 7 members of the Federal Reserve Board and the 12 presidents of the Federal Reserve banks determine how much money the people will have. That is, the volume of money and what the interest rates shall be on Government securities. They buy and sell Government securities, and by their actions control the reserves in the more than 6,000 member banks in the Federal Reserve System which have 85 per cent of the deposits in the 14,000 banks in the United States. These reserves determine whether money is comparatively easy or hard to come by and whether it is obtainable at beneficial or harmful rates of interest.

It is a fact that the Open Market Committee's actions have created three depressions the last 10 years — 1953-54, 1957-58, 1960-61. Each of these man-made recessions was preceded by tighter money and higher interest rates. We cannot afford any longer for such an expensive group to operate secretly. There should be no mystery whatsoever —no secrecy—concerning the control of money supply, interest rates, or credit. These are matters affecting the public from the time they get up in the morning until they retire at night. For the Federal Reserve and the banker-oriented Open Market Committee to cloak the workings of the money system in the mantle of secrecy is to violate the prime rule of a free society. There is a place for such secrecy only in an authoritarian state.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

If we had maintained the interest rates in effect prior to the Eisenhower regime, the carrying charges on our entire national debt would be $6 instead of $11 billion per year, and the debt itself would be $270 rather than $310 billion.

If these people are able to get away with it they will continue to encourage monetary policies that can lead only to a $600 billion national debt within 15 years at a 6-per cent carrying charge amounting to $36 billion per year of the taxpayers' money.

To show how pernicious is the effect of interest increases, one-fourth per cent increase in the rate of interest on the national debt would cost the taxpayer approximately $800 million a year.

Now let us look at increased interest costs as they pertain to homeownership. A national farm organization has estimated that home mortagages during the period 1952-63 have cost homeowners $6 billion more than they would have had to pay if the rates had been held to the pre-Eisenhower regime interest rates. This $6 billion alone is enough to cover the capital costs of between half a million and a million new houses for middle and lower income families.

This small but formidable group of tight money, high interest rate devotees are the insiders who back up William McChesney Martin when he arrogantly pronounces how independent the Federal Reserve System is and must remain—and how wicked the polticians are who want to do away with this mythical independence and instead make the Fed responsive to the President rather than to a bunch of money hucksters. These are the people who want no reform of the Federal Reserve Board. They boast about being insulated against the politicians—Congress and the President—but they do not deny working closely with the big bankers who have the most to gain by their actions.

The Constitution wisely provides that Congress shall coin money and regulate its value for the reason that the Congress and the President, who would control the money, would be accountable to the people who would have an opportunity to express approval or disapproval at the polls. If monetary matters are left to the Federal Reserve, insulated from the people, then the public will have no way to express its approval or disapproval of their actions.

The fact is an independent Federal Reserve means something that is not in the framework of our constitutional system, which says that Congress will make the laws and the President shall execute them. Those who desire a dictatorship on money matters by a "banker's club" —away from the Congress and the President—are in effect advocating another form of government alien to our own.

As the tight money, high interest clique sees it, it is perfectly all right for the President to be able to appoint his own Secretary of the Treasury and his economic advisers. But it would be "politically mischievous" for him to be able to appoint the head of the Federal Reserve or to find out what goes on in the Open Market Committee meetings.

In other words, those who consider monetary matters hallowed ground are insisting that the bankers control the volume of money and the cost of interest. They contend that the politicians—the people who are elected by the people—are not competent to pass upon questions involved. It is perfectly all right for the Congress and the President elected by the people to pass on the use of nuclear missiles, the atomic bomb, the appropriations and expenditures of government, the drafting of the young men into military service and into war, but they are not competent to pass upon monetary matters.

As the money trust sees it, financial matters must be left entirely up to bankers. They alone are qualified to understand the deep mystique of money. Which reminds me that it was Woodrow Wilson, who, when asked by a group of bankers to appoint bankers to the Federal Reserve Board, inquired:

"Which one of you gentlemen would want me to appoint railroad presidents to the Interstate Commerce Commission?"

The Domestic Finance Subcommittee of the House Committee on Banking and Currency spent a good part of the past year taking a rare close look at the Federal Reserve System. Out of its investigation has come a bill that will be presented at the opening of the next session of Congress. Rep. Patman believes this measure will help correct some of the inadequacies that he finds in the present system. Among the subcommittee's recommendations are these:

1. Make the term of the Chairman of the Board of Governors of the Fed end at the same time as the President's.

2. Reduce the number of Governors on the Federal Reserve Board to five.

3. Reduce the terms of office to five years and permit reappointments. pointed to the board of Governors.

4. Permit non-bankers to be ap-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

5. Make a public audit of all expenditures of the Federal Reserve Board and the Reserve banks. This has never been done in the case of the banks.

6. Have the President set forth in his periodic Economic Reports, recommendations concerning monetary policy, domestic and foreign, including the growth of the money supply necessary to attain the goals of maximum employment and production and purchasing power.

7. Have the Federal Reserve Board operate in the open market so as to facilitate the achievement of the President's monetary policy,

He's Angry

We publish now an advertisement that actually appeared in a small town weekly newspaper. Names and places have been changed to avoid involving THE IDLER in what appears to be an extremely heated controversy. Our only interest in this document is that we feel it stands as a small classic of the Righteous Indignation School of literature (Stream of Consciousness Division):

TAXPAYERS WATCHDOG

I think now the taxpayers realize why you didn't take me up on my propositions, and if you decide to go to court again, Mr. Rogers, my propositions are still valid.

Going back to the rescue truck, it should really mean going back to the rescue of the taxpayers. The meeting of August 7 again proved the way this town is being run. It is just too bad that I didn't know that that meeting was being held. If I had been present, I certainly would have cleared up a lot of the fairy tales. Mr. McIntire's statement that he "had not heard a thing" — did you forget our telephone conversation, Mr. McIntire?

And when Mr. McIntire was asked, do you know the difference between a rescue truck and a van, Mr. McIntire replied no. Then why is he chairman of the Rescue Truck Purchasing Committee? If I was chairman of the Rescue Truck Purchasing Committee and I didn't know the difference between a rescue truck and a van, I certainly would resign. The American Everyday Dictionary states under Van 1) A covered truck for moving furniture.

With regard to the statement made by Mr. Ossona, our former fire chief, calling the $14,000 needed and justified, how did you ever arrive at that statement?

In answer to the statement made by Mr. Johnson, that the $14,000 was no secret, but I think the bid was, this is no reason why the committee should not buy the same truck for less money. And where did you get the attitude that because the taxpayers approved $14,000 that they should spend $14,000?

And with regard to the statement by Mr. Mallis, a council member, that the town was aware that the rescue vehicle could have been purchased for $7000.00 through the federal government, then don't you think it was your duty to insist on it?

And with regard to the last paragraph where you said it can be assumed . . . , by whom, Mr. Mallis, by what experiences and what qualifications do you feel qualified in knowing about prices of rescue trucks.

My only purpose of the publications is to protect the interests of the taxpayers, and it does not matter to me whom I embarrass or on whose toes I step regardless of whether he be a Democrat, Republican, friend or foe, as long as I have the true facts known to the taxpayers.

If the men that were responsible for the purchase of this truck were not qualified to know what they were purchasing, they should have been men enough to get advice from men that have the necessary experience and qualifications. The proper thing would have been to get advice from the owners of the Town Express, Wilson's Garage, Joe's Garage, Charlie's Auto Body and others along that line that have years of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

successful experience and knowing and learning from costly mistakes. Men of this caliber would be well qualified to adapt their knowledge to the purchasing of the right truck, the right size, horsepower ratings, transmission gearation, etc., and as the old saying goes, when you are in need of medical attention you don't take the advice from a corkscrew manufacturer, and I am not referring to the successful bidder.

And don't you think for one minute that you have heard the end of the Rescue Truck.

Wilson "Paladin" Burke
Have Facts—Will Publish

P.S. And now Mr. Wortheim, you can truthfully state that the street lights have been installed on Media Avenue. Now all that is left for you to do is to remove the unnecessary expensive vapor light in front of the former home of the sewer commissioner and replace it with the identical light installed on Media Ave., and may I thank you.

Coming features:

The Old Folk's Home Sewer Line

The $40,000.00 Fire Truck, commonly called the "Cherry Picker" and where to put it.

The purchasing of a new cesspool truck.

William Avenue

Overhead doors and coming resignations and others too numerous to mention.

John Schneider, vice president of CBS-TV, explained:

"When Mr. Kennedy attempted to enter the studio where Senator Keating was broadcasting, Sen. Keating already was on the air. Sen. Keating had bought the time and was entitled to make his broadcast undisturbed.

"We have security guards. We just don't let people walk into doors."

—Washington Daily News

Right. They might crack their heads and the next thing you know you have a lawsuit on your hands.

SAND-CRACKS

How come you didn't solicit 783 little children to attest to the fact that playing in a sand box will cause sand-cracks between your toes? You must be aware of the reporting methods necessary to succeed in America — that wonderful place that wants to have a War on Poverty to teach more people how to read while the reading table is almost bare.

Ken Parsons
New York City

We admit our research department is rather small. When we set out to do a story on sand-cracks we just don't have time to interview 783 little children. About the best we can do is look between our own toes.—Ed.

HURRICANE ISLAND

I have read the Hurricane Island story with interest. I know the area and appreciate your feelings.

I have a place at West Cundy Point (Great Island) so perhaps am prejudiced with respect to the Maine coastal islands. As you know, there are hundreds of them and one who loves the area as you do would always find a warm welcome whether at Hurricane or another similar spot.

Sincerely yours,
Margaret Chase Smith
United States Senator

And indeed we have. Mrs. Smith's place is on Casco Bay which boasts

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

365 islands — one for each day of the year. We've never been able to find them all (we suspect some tidal rocks are included in the count) but it'll be a long time before Maine runs out of attractive isles.—Ed.

Calls Novel Reading Dangerous

Those who spend their time trying to tell others what they shall not read will find little historical comfort but perhaps some perspective in reviewing what one of their philosophical colleagues out of the past had to say on the subject of novels. Substitute "Henry Miller" every place the word "novel" appears and the piece below, taken from an 1858 edition of *The Happy Home and Parlor Magazine*, could prove quite suitable for the next issue of the Anti-Obscenity Committee's newsletter:

Novel reading is not only dangerous, and acts on the mind as ardent spirits does on the body, but it is also a waste of precious time, for which God will require a strict account.

Dr. Hawes gives it as his opinion, that "no habitual reader of novels can love the Bible, or any other book that demands thought, or inculcates the serious duties of life." They become disgusted with the plainness and simplicity of truth, and require and search for something new and exciting to the imagination.

But again; the taste for novel reading when once acquired, is hard to get rid of. Take an example: A young lady who had indulged for some time in the habit of novel reading, on becoming pious, found to her sorrow, that her imagination had become so fascinated, and her taste so vitiated by this pernicious reading, that she could not fix on anything permanently.

But again; it sometimes leads even to insanity! A physician in Massachusetts says: "I have seen a young lady with her table loaded with volumes of fictitious trash, poring day after day and night after night over highly-wrought scenes, and skillfully portraited pictures of romance, until her cheeks grew pale, her eyes became cold and restless, and her mind wandered and was lost. The light of intelligence passed behind a cloud, her soul forever benighted. She became insane—incurably insane, from reading novels."

Hannah More says: "The constant familiarity with works of fiction, even with such as are not exceptionable in themselves, relaxes the mind that wants hardening; dissolves the heart that wants fortifying; stirs the imagination that wants quieting; irritates the passions which want calming; and, above all, disinclines and disqualifies for active virtues and for spiritual exercises. The habitual indulgence in such reading is a silent, mining mischief."

Many more facts, and much more testimony might be adduced to prove the dangerous and injurious results that flow from novel reading. As poison acts on the body, so do they effect the mind, the heart, the moral character. And they should be kept far from the family circle, and never be placed within the reach of the young, who should avoid them as they do things of danger.

HOW MANY ARE WE?

*By Rep. Arnold Olsen**

It is becoming increasingly apparent to everyone that this country cannot wait until 1970 for the next census of population. Every day we are reminded anew that as we get further away from the last census held in 1960, we are attempting to resolve and to legislate upon matters of greatest importance without the factual information necessary to arrive at intelligent and informed judgments. Wherever we turn — whether it is apportionment of members of the house or members of the state legislatures, whether it is determining state allocations under the new antipoverty program, or whether it is assigning state and local government quotas for our now

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

vast expenditures for health, education, manpower, and welfare—everywhere we turn we find that we just do not have the up-to-date information we need concerning our population, our housing, and our labor force.

In spite of all the money this Nation spends for statistics we just do not know anything quantitative about the economic and social changes that have taken place since 1960. The Census Bureau tells us that one family in five moves every year, and that the lower income families often move as much as three times a year and many of these moves are across state lines. Yet, time after time, when we try to get recent information from the Federal agencies about our states and local communities, they tell us that the most recent data they have is from the 1960 census. In fact, often they give you the old census data and try to pass it off as something else. Next year our U.S. population will total 196 million, and we should reach 200 million before 1967. Our population increase since 1960 is already larger than the total population of our 17 smallest states. This increase is four times the total U.S. population of 1790, when our first census was taken.

Now, with one family in five moving every year, where are those people now in 1964? No one knows for sure and if you ask the Census Bureau, they will be the first to tell you so. But a child who was 18 in 1960 is 22 this year—so that allocations to the states under the antipoverty program will, by necessity, be made on these families not as they are today, but as they were 4 years ago. Moreover, since there has been a substantial improvement in economic conditions since 1960, a large number of families have long since departed the under $1,000 income class and here again, just how many we do not know.

Let me cite another illustration from the antipoverty bill. Funds are to be allotted to states on the ratio of unemployment in the state to the total U.S. unemployment. Now, there is considerable discussion about the accuracy of our unemployment figures. But, what about the state estimates of unemployment compiled by the Department of Labor? Let me quote from the report of the President's Committee To Appraise Employment and Unemployment Statistics, the Gordon Committee report, which says that these data "are of uncertain economic significance as the basis for constructing estimates" and then goes on to say that these data are "of uncertain accuracy."

Now, how in Heaven's name can the administration allocate funds to the states in the antipoverty program based on such statistics as I have described? The answer, of course, is that millons of dollars will be misspent and illspent.

The Subcommittee on Census and Government Statistics held exhaustive hearings on the need for a mid-decade census during the 87th Congress. We took testimony from state governors, mayors of our large cities, and from a large number of experts in this field. A large majority of state governors favored the middecade census, as well as the mayors of our largest cities — New York, Chicago, Los Angeles. Economists, social scientists, demographers, market analysts, advertisers—all testified before our subcommittee that this country could ill afford to wait until 1970 for the next census. In view of the strong support around the country, we were shocked to learn that the Bureau of the Budget opposed any middecade census. We were more shocked to learn that they opposed it, not because of the cost, which would be understandable, but because they told us we did not need it. They told us that they could take care of all our data needs with what they called "studies in depth" and they could sample any problem we had and come up with reliable statistics.

Well now, with this antipoverty legislation, their poor judgment and advice to the President has come home to roost. In this legislation they are advising the President and Sargent Shriver to make fiscal determinations and to allocate funds to states on the basis of statistics which the President's Committee itself has disowned as being of "uncertain accuracy." These gentlemen in the Bureau of the Budget, however well intentioned they may be, have done a disservice not only to the President and Congress, but also to the low-income families of this country.

The Census Bureau has assured me that they could arrange to take a national census of population, housing, and the labor force in April 1966. It is already too late for a 1965 census and we can blame the Bureau of the Budget for this. How much would it cost? The Census Director tells me that a simplified type of census could be taken for about $50 million—the cost would go up, of course, if more questions are added. The comprehensive 1960 census cost almost $100 million, but, for our needs, this figure could be cut in half, if not more. New enumeration procedures of the Census Bureau, tested recently in

---

**Excerpts of a speech before the House of Representatives by Rep. Arnold Olsen (D-Mont.). Rep. Olsen is Chairman of the Subcommittee on Census and Government Statistics.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Louisville, Ky., may result in even greater savings.

The census should be financed from the funds to be appropriated for the antipoverty legislation. I would go further and say that the census in addition to collecting information which will be vital also to apportionment problems and to civil rights legislation, should be directed toward obtaining specific information about our low income families —who they are, where they are, and, if you will, why they are. Let us not delude ourselves that the $947 million authorized this year will do any more than launch this program. We can reasonably expect to spend a billion a year from now on. Let us put some dimensions on the problem we are attacking and we can do this by earmarking 5 percent of this year's funds for a national census. We stand to waste well over 5 percent of the antipoverty funds not only this year but in each subsequent year, because of mis-spent and ill-spent moneys Poor statistics must necessarily lead to poor planning.

Our Favorite Story About Cab Drivers

(Everybody has a favorite story about cab drivers. The following is ours. It is not fiction, but a true account, recorded by one of our correspondents late one evening — moments after leaving the cab driver in question. The scene was Washington):

The cab driver was so short that he could barely see over the steering wheel. He had grey hair and each hand sported two large rings. I gave my address, he repeated it aloud, then there was silence. We drove along: I drifted out of the cab to other places, saw people who did not walk the streets. A voice spoke.

"Excuse me," I said.

The cab driver hesitated. "Maybe you don't want to talk." His voice had an anxious, breathy quality. It sounded as if he had run several blocks just to speak those words to me.

"No, that's all right," I replied.

"I was noticing that daskhound or whatever you call it back there. They're funny dogs, so spread out with their legs apart and all."

"Yes, they are." I felt fairly satisfied. The cab driver had picked a subject about which I felt somewhat qualified to speak, at least under these circumstances. I offered: "They were bred that way for burrowing in holes. I have a friend who had a dachshund. One day its backlegs collapsed and for two months he just kept dragging them behind him."

"It's strange how things will happen."

I murmured agreement.

"Now take a mechanical device such as this here. Several times a day just a light pressure on the brakes will cause them to tighten up real fast . . . like this."

I lurched forward.

"Or the human body. For reasons unknown to the human mind the autonomous nervous system causes involuntary reactions at unspecified frequencies."

"Like a twitch?"

"That's the idea."

I felt safer talking about cars.

"Did you read the article about the automatic brake that stops the car as soon as you take the pressure off the gas pedal?"

"Sounds like something Buck Nelson was talking about . . .no, it wasn't Buck Nelson, it was someone who was taking his place. He was describing how he had discovered on his trips to Venus that they had managed to do away with the wheel entirely. Instead, magnetic force is utilized . . ."

"Who is Buck Nelson?"

"Buck Nelson is a man, who, well he's sort of like one of these science fiction men, but he maintains, with apparent validity, that on his expeditions to Venus it is found that the wheel has been replaced with a force dependent upon the operation of the magnetic field, causing the vehicle to be raised and float off the ground a few feet, thence to move with tremendous speed toward its target—or, I mean, the place to which it is going."

"Uh-huh."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"The brilliance behind this device is that it is a revolutionary development in comparison with the humble internal combustion engine. In the present day engine, fuel must be purchased, placed inside a storage tank where it waits until further action occurs with the aid of a generator and a battery which create a mere spark which is nonetheless necessary if the gasoline is going to be converted into energy at all. But by doing away with these steps, as well as the gears and wheels, the ninety per cent efficiency loss is avoided and man reaches his goal simply and perfectly.

"It was a strange coincidence. . . . I picked up this man at the Woodner Hotel and asked me to take him to the Spiral Ranch in Maryland. Of course, ranch — or 'range' — is not a word commonly used in place designation east of the Mississippi and the word 'spiral' sent my mind spiralling from the innermost recesses of my soul out into the universe and finally to infinity. Naturally I couldn't tell him that. But I did mention the fact that I had created plans for an *airwaycar* that would operate on the magnetic principle which I told you about, and that if the monopolists would not give me money in the next year I was going to proceed on my own."

With these last words, the cab had pulled up to a light. The driver rested one short arm along the top of the front seat and looked hard into my eyes. I avoided his, and stared instead at the rings on his right hand. Both were large. One contained a blue stone.. The other, on his third finger, was part silver and part a black stone which seemed to have the design of a face.

"Have any monopolists given you help?" I asked.

A laugh came from the front seat. "My friend, the monopolists, are the annointed, they sit at the table of the mighty, in a country which spouts forth in its churches and synagogues the slogan 'Lay not your treasures upon earth.' They care not whether they are cocker spaniels or Russian wolf dogs. They sit at the doorstep of the big house on Pennsylvania Avenue and watch the spoils being divided up amongst the six DuPonts and they expect me, the cab driver, to express adulation.

"Many a time have I taken persons to the Department of Justice and before letting them step into the street I have queried: 'Are you aware that merely a few blocks away from this, open quotes, Department of Justice, close quotes quickly, on Pennsylvania Avenue, the spoils of this nation are being divided up amongst the six DuPonts who don't know whether they are cocker spaniels or Russian wolf dogs, all the time expecting me, the cab driver, to express adulation?' They seldom answer.

"I have written a tourist guide to the Universe, have attempted to have it printed. Sent one copy to Senator Hubert Humphrey and another to Representative James Roosevelt. The first part was entitled *A Guide to the Finite Human Mind as it Makes its Way Down the Dark Corridors of the Political and Creative Arts.* Once that was published, I was going to bring out another volume, this one entitled *A Guide to the Finite Human Mind as it Makes its Way Down the Dark Corridors of the Religious Arts.* I received a very nice letter from the late Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt, this lady who represented the highest ideal of an occasionally proud and undaunted but too often oppressed and subservient democracy. She's been a misfortunate victim of villifications by the very forces that would bend until breaking the very iron of democratic society. Anyway, she said and I quote: 'My dear Mr. Melster: I certainly enjoyed reading your work which contained an extremely interesting statement of your point of view. I hope that you may be able to find fullest possible expression for your ideas. Sincerely, Eleanor Roosevelt.' "

We pulled to a stop in front, or to be more exact, down the street from my apartment. I had only a ten dollar bill to pay the buck fare.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"I don't want to detain you but I would tell you just this . . . two, three . . . I had a radio program in California in 1941 called *Richard Melster Challenges*. It was brief . . . four . . . but essential experiment.

"An experiment . . . five, six . . . in talking sense at an eighth grade level . . . seven, eight . . . but even that is not a level that all people can understand . . . nine, ten . . ."

I searched in my pockets for a tip.

"Thank you," he said. "I don't want to detain you but I just thought you might be interested . . . an eighth grade mind, an eighth grade level. And still, I was not allowed in this great democracy of tompainethomasjeffersonandrewjacksonabrahamlincolnetal to proceed past this point because of the infinitesimally small minds that controlled the educational system in the great albeit overstuffed and too full of oranges state of California."

I put one foot out the door.

"Those were the days of prohibition. I was in eighth grade. Every child in my class was instructed to write an essay defending prohibition. Now I had often been to the Episcopal Church with my mother and I knew that those who believed in that particular faith were not above an occasional nip and the same was true with my Catholic father although he might have told his confessor something to the contrary. And my mother's sister was married to a Methodist who was the worst of all. All of them drinking and I knew full well that the evil did not rest with drink but with the mind that partook of drink. And the voice that spoke profanity upon drinking and the body that treated mankind meanly for having done so. So I wrote my essay which opened as follows:

" 'There is no evil in drink as such, only in those who do the drinking. For mere alcohol is neither moral nor immoral. The human being is capable of being both . . .'

"My teacher, her name was Miss Richter and she could cry when the emotional situation demanded it, she had me read my essay in class the first of all. I got no further than I have indicated to you when she said, 'Dicky, don't you know that the President of the United States believes in prohibition?'

"I replied, 'Then I care no more for the President of the United States than I do for prohibition.'

"I was marched to the principal who had me read the closing words which went:

"Prohibitive walls mean nothing if they are built up outside the individual. It is only through a mature understanding and a meaningful education that prohibitive walls can be built up, and then only in the individual, by the individual.

"The principal was shocked and asked, 'Who wrote that for you, Dicky?' I told him, 'I could have written this the way you and Miss Richter wanted me to had I been willing to desecrate every value I hold dear as a student within a free democracy.' And my friend I never returned to the eighth grade."

I waited in silence, not knowing whether I would hear more or be excused.

"Now I'm sorry to have taken so much of your time. I appreciate you listening to me."

"That's all right," I replied, but the words sounded inadequate. As I stepped out of the cab and closed the door behind me, I heard the driver say, "Yes, free."

ADULTS ONLY

A Love Affair with the Piano! Master Lessons, taught through correspondence, by artist teacher of over 30 years experience. Modest fee; free consultations at any time. IDLER Box N-1.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ADVERTISEMENTS

1. Commission-based Ads. Our policy is explained elsewhere in this issue. **Where only an Idler box number is listed, readers should include a five cent stamp so their inquiry may be quickly forwarded to the advertiser.**

2. Free Ads for Subscribers. May not be selling a service or product. Should be brief. The Idler reserves the right to edit all ads. Ads in this category will be dropped after one month unless request is renewed. The Idler assumes no responsibilities for transactions. Printed on space-available basis.

3. Paid Classified Advertising: Ten cents a word.

4. Other Paid Advertising: See elsewhere in this issue for rates.

ADVERTISING DEADLINE:
1st OF PRECEDING MONTH

TIRED OF complaints from your wife? The children never write — even your son in the service? Give the best Christmas gift possible — a Westinghouse cartridge battery tape recorder weighing less than 3 lbs. The children talk their letters. You hear their actual voices. Then you chat with them on the same tape and return it to them.

One for $72.95. Two for $142.50 (If Penna. add 5% sales tax.) You can be SURE if it is Westinghouse. H. DAVIS, 1105 Adams-Presidential Blvd., Philadelphia 19131.

PAINTINGS

FRAME your bankbook? Hardly. Bronze busts of bank tellers? Never. Buy these paintings by a prize-winning artist and enjoy keeping an eye on your investment. Can be seen at The Idler office by appointment. Call 546-9662 or write Idler Box S-1.

BE THE MOST popular Dad in town! Give a West German Precision Stop Watch and/or Mile Pedometer for Christmas. $6.95 each or both for $13.50 (If Penna., add 5% sales tax). H. DAVIS, 1105 Adams-Presidential Blvd., Philadelphia 19131.

WANTED: One used "Assimil" French course in at least relatively good condition. Write L. S., Apt. 2C, 7005 Shore Road, Brooklyn 9, N. Y.

FOR SALE: Blaine Hat. Worn in 1884 campaign. Inscribed "Young Men's Blaine Club," Cincinnati. $20 C.K.P. 1106 Cherokee Road, Louisville, Ky. 40204.

BACK-ISSUE INDEX

Each month, THE IDLER prints an index of articles from past issues that have continuing interest. While they last, these back issues may be ordered from THE IDLER, 125 5th St. NE, Washington 2, D. C. at 50c a copy. Please enclose the proper amount. We can not bill.

CONGRESSIONAL REVIEW—Summary of major legislation passed by last Congress. (Nov. '64)

HURRICANES—Detailed report of what they are, how they are formed, and their effects (Sept. '64)

PRAYER-READING DECISION OF SUPREME COURT—Detailed reply to critics by constitutional lawyer Leo Pfeffer (Sept. '64)

PUERTO RICO—Contains useful historical information and a look ahead. (Nov. '64)

TITANIC—New light on the role of the **Californian** in the **Titanic** disaster. (Oct. '64)

VOTING REGISTRATION—Why millions are disenfranchised by restrictive registration laws. (Oct. '64)

WHIP—Describes the functions of a Congressional whip. (Nov. '64)

WANT TO SUBSCRIBE?
TURN TO PAGE 16

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The IDLER

DECEMBER 1964

THE IDLER'S JOURNAL ..... Page 7

THE CASE AGAINST THE MLF ..... Page 8

ASK UNCLE ABNER ..... Page 14

TELEVISION ..... Page 17

ABC's OF MONEY ..... Page 20

LETTERS ..... Page 25

HOW MANY ARE WE? ..... Page 26

OUR FAVORITE CAB DRIVER STORY ..... Page 28

PLUS NUMEROUS OTHER DIVERSIONS

THE IDLER
125 5th St. NE
Washington 2, D. C.-20002

Return Requested

Bulk Rate
U. S. POSTAGE
PAID
Warren, R. I.
Permit No. 36

THIRD CLASS MAIL

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED